

EDWARD J. MARKEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

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United States Senate

August 5, 2016

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1550 MAIN STREET, 4TH FLOOR  
SPRINGFIELD, MA 01101  
413-785-4610

The Honorable Tom Wheeler  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th St. SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler:

I write to express my concern about the ongoing retransmission consent dispute between Sunbeam Television and DirecTV, which is affecting approximately 160,000 DirecTV subscribers in Greater Boston who have been left without their normal access to WHDH programming since July 16. When the Olympics begin this evening, such suspension of service will become even more serious for these customers.

I make no representations as to the merits of either side's position, as these are contractual discussions between private parties. I have written to both companies encouraging them to remain engaged in good faith negotiations. (See attachment)

Clearly, the public interest would be served if carriage is restored by the parties at the earliest possible opportunity so that customers are no longer disadvantaged as a result of this dispute. We request that you take action to bring the parties together so these negotiations can be concluded in an equitable and expeditious manner and signal restored. Consumers should not be caught in the middle.

I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

*Edward J. Markey*

Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

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Mr. Edmund Ansin  
President  
Sunbeam Television Corp  
1401 79<sup>th</sup> Street Causeway  
North Bay Village, FL 33141

Mr. Randall L. Stephenson  
Chairman and CEO  
AT&T (DirecTV)  
208 South Akard Street  
Dallas, TX 75202

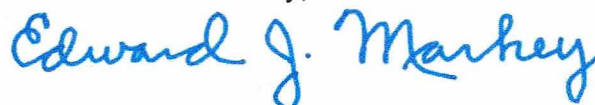
Dear Mr. Ansin and Mr. Stephenson:

I write to express my concern about the impact your ongoing business dispute over retransmission fees is having on approximately 160,000 DirecTV subscribers in Greater Boston who have been left without their normal access to WHDH programming since July 16. When the Olympics begin this evening, such suspension of service will become even more serious for these customers.

I make no representations as to the merits of either side's position, as these are contractual discussions between private parties. I encourage both parties to remain engaged in good faith negotiations. I am also requesting that the Federal Communications Commission take action to bring both parties together so these negotiations can be concluded in an equitable and expeditious manner. Consumers should not be caught in the middle.

I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF  
THE CHAIRMAN

October 3, 2016

The Honorable Edward J. Markey  
United States Senate  
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Markey:

Thank you for your letter expressing concern regarding the retransmission consent dispute between Sunbeam Television and DirecTV, which, as you know, has now been resolved.

Congress, in Section 325 of the Communications Act, sought to reduce the likelihood that TV viewers would be disadvantaged by contract disputes between broadcasters and multichannel video programming distributors (MVPDs). The law requires broadcasters and MVPDs to negotiate for retransmission consent in good faith. Congress gave the Commission the authority to keep an eye on these negotiations, and our rules include a framework to determine whether broadcasters and MVPDs are negotiating in good faith.

Many broadcasters and MVPDs take that responsibility seriously and conclude hundreds of retransmission consent deals without interruption. And this process is entirely invisible to their viewers – as it should be. That's not to say, however, that impasses like the one between Sunbeam Television and DirecTV won't happen. And when they do, I am prepared to use the authority Congress has conferred on the Commission to help to bring negotiations to a conclusion.

At this time, I am aware of no evidence to suggest that either party violated our rules, and I am pleased that the parties resolved their dispute. Please do not hesitate to let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Tom Wheeler", is written over a horizontal line.

Tom Wheeler